

# The Prehistory of the Japanese Language in the Light of Evidence from the Structures of Japanese and Korean

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IN THE nineteenth century the idea that one language could evolve into a group of related languages became widely accepted. In that century a method of demonstrating which languages had common origins, the comparative method, was for all practical purposes perfected. This method involves the establishment of phonological correspondences between two or more languages and leads to the hypothetical reconstruction of lexical items in the common ancestral language. Furthermore, once the phonological developments of two or more related languages have been worked out, it usually becomes possible to identify loanwords and even to determine whether one group of borrowings was made before or after another.

During the nineteenth century the search for relatives of Japanese began. It was easy enough to identify sound correspondences between Japanese and Ryukyuan, between Japanese and Korean, between Japanese and Chinese, and between Japanese and Vietnamese (formerly called Annamese). But except for Ryukyuan, the easily identified correspondences were confined to lexical items that were obviously Chinese. Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese have all borrowed heavily from Chinese, and this heavy borrowing has taken place within the last 2000 years, almost entirely during the historical period in each case. The non-Chinese elements in the vocabularies of Korean and Vietnamese resemble neither each other nor those of Japanese. The syntax and semantics of Korean, however, resemble those of Japanese to an astonishing extent. They are moreover quite different from those of Chinese and Vietnamese. In terms of language typology Japanese and Korean share many features with the languages of the Uralic and Altaic families. This

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resemblance has repeatedly led linguists to look for phonological correspondences between Japanese, Korean, Altaic, and Uralic. But it is only within the past decade that reputable comparatists have convincingly demonstrated that reconstructions of portions of the non-Chinese vocabularies of Japanese and Korean and of Japanese and Altaic can actually be made.

In 1966 S. E. Martin, using data from modern Japanese and Korean, worked out for the first time a Proto-Japanese-Korean phonology (Martin 1966). In 1967 R. A. Miller (1967*a*), using data from Old Japanese, refined Martin's phonology. In the same year G. Ledyard informed me that the earliest data from Korean would establish firmly some additional etymologies that Martin and Miller had considered shaky (personal communication). In 1967 Miller further showed that data from Japanese could be used to clarify certain problems in Proto-Altaic phonology. On the basis of this work the Altaist J. Street (1973) has accepted Miller's thesis that Japanese is related to Altaic. There are still some comparatists who question whether the Japanese vocabulary which exhibits sound correspondences with Korean or Altaic goes directly back to an original Altaic vocabulary, or whether it goes back to very early loanwords. But one way or the other, whether Japanese and Korean and Altaic have a common origin or whether they were merely in close contact in remote times, from the prehistorian's point of view what matters is that the linguistic evidence indicates an early contact of some sort. The ancestor of Japanese on linguistic evidence is placed in the vicinity of the ancestors of Korean and the Altaic languages.

Why has this been so difficult for comparatists to establish? The reason is the very great time depth involved. The relationship between Japanese and the Altaic languages is certainly not close. (In this paper I follow a common usage in which the term Altaic refers to the languages of the Turkic, Mongolian, and Tungusic groups. I do this not to show that I disagree with Miller's thesis that Japanese is related to the Altaic languages, but simply because I wish to refer more than once to these languages as a group vis-à-vis Japanese and Korean.) We do not know, of course, just how long ago the ancestor of Japanese parted company from the others, but for what it is worth the application of glottochronology to the data yields the following dates: Japanese and Altaic (Manchu), 6195 B.P.; Japanese and Korean, 4632 B.P.; Korean and Altaic (Manchu), 5550 B.P. (Miller 1967*b*). Whatever the actual dates may have been, the relationship is not closer than that between the extremes of the Indo-European languages (Street 1973: 954), which are now considered to have been members of a single dialect continuum as late as the middle of the third millennium B.C. (ca. 4500 B.P.).

But if Japanese and Korean have been out of touch for 4500 years or more, how are we to account for their typological similarity? The Indo-European languages exhibit a very great typological diversity. Yet as I stated above, the syntax and semantics of Japanese and Korean resemble each other to an astonishing extent. (Note that I do not refer here to morphology. The Korean and Japanese morphologies, particularly the verbal morphologies, are quite different, as different as we might expect them to be after such a long period of separation.) One would expect the typologies of Japanese and Korean to differ at least as much as do those of Japanese and, say, Turkish or Mongolian. Yet the syntax and semantics of Japanese differ less from those of Korean than do those of English from those of German,

from which English parted company less than 2500 years ago. (The Angles and Saxons arrived in Britain from North Germany in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D., but they had not been in direct contact with South Germany [where Standard German originated] for at least 600 years.)

Let us consider the sentences below with their Korean (K) and Japanese (J) equivalents. The Korean versions are adapted from S. E. Martin's *Korean in a Hurry*; the Japanese versions are my translations from the Korean.

1. 'I bought two newspapers.'

K: sinmun-ul twu-cang sa-ss -ey-yo.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

J: sinbun-o ní -bu ka-ttá-n -desu.

Interpretation: 1. newspaper, 2. object marker, 3. two, 4. item, 5. buy, 6. past-tense marker, 7-8. polite-style marker.

The syntax and semantics of the Korean version of sentence 1. differ from those of the Japanese only in the structure of the polite-style marker. Neither version expresses the subject and in fact both are ambiguous in this matter. The words for newspaper are ambiguous as to number. Both languages lack count nouns, and all nouns must be counted with measures (-cang and -bu in this case), as if they were mass nouns. Even the measure itself lacks a singular-plural distinction. Nor is such a distinction found in the verb.

The absence of count nouns and the use of measures with all nouns is, to be sure, also a feature of Chinese, and indeed of many East Asian languages. But a Chinese translation of the sentence will quickly show how different Chinese syntax is from that of Japanese and Korean:

wo<sup>3</sup> mai<sup>3</sup> le liang<sup>3</sup> ke pao<sup>4</sup> le.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Interpretation: 1. I, me, 2. buy, 3. and 7. completed action marker, 4. two, 5. item, 6. newspaper. In Chinese, in contrast to Japanese and Korean, the subject *is* expressed, the object follows the verb, and the measure precedes the object (which has no object marker).

If we compare the English version of the sentence with its German equivalent, we see that the two exhibit greater syntactic differences than the Japanese and the Korean:

I bough-t two newspaper-s.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Ich hab-e zwei Zeitung -en ge-kauf-t.

In German, in contrast to English, verbs are always inflected for the number and person of the subject, hence the marker -e (5) of the first person singular. The German past tense does resemble the English perfect ('have bought'), but the German participle is placed at the end of the clause and is marked not only by a

suffix, but by the prefix *ge-* (9) as well. German also permits the word order 'Zwei Zeitungen habe ich gekauft', which has no counterpart in modern English.

The foregoing sentence is not terribly complex, but I hope to show that even the most involved Korean sentences are strikingly similar in their syntax and semantics to their Japanese translations. Even the sentence above, however, can be used to illustrate how Japanese and Korean are closer in structure to each other than to the Altaic languages. Consider a translation of the sentence into Turkish:

ben iki gazete satIn al-dI-m.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Interpretation: 1. I, 2. two, 3. newspaper, 4. purchase, 5. do, 6. past-tense marker, 7. first person singular subject marker.

In Turkish, in contrast to Japanese and Korean, the subject is represented by both a pronoun and a verb suffix. Turkish has count nouns and the word for 'newspaper' does have a plural 'gazeteler', but the plural is not marked when a noun follows a numeral.

2.a. 'Is my wife home?'

K: anhay-ka cip-ey iss-umni -kka.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

J: kánai-ga uti-ni i -màs -u-ka.

Interpretation: 1. humble wife, 2. subject marker, 3. humble house, 4. location marker, 5. be (humbly), 6. nonfamiliarity marker, 7. nonpast-tense marker, 8. question marker, 1-8 literally: 'Is the humble wife humbly in the humble house?'

2.b. 'Is your wife home?'

K: puin -i tayk-ey kesi -mni -kka.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

J: ókusama-ga otaku-ni irassya-imàs-u-ka.

Interpretation: 1. exalted wife, 2. subject marker, 3. exalted house, 4. location marker, 5. be (exaltedly), 6. nonfamiliarity marker, 7. nonpast-tense marker, 8. question marker, 1-8 literally: 'Is the exalted wife exaltedly in the exalted house?'

Here again there is near perfect agreement in the syntax and semantics of Korean and Japanese, the principal point of difference being a morphological one: the marking in Japanese of the nonpast tense. Korean marks the past and future tenses but not the present, while Japanese lumps future and present together in one marked form. Both languages prefer to avoid the use of possessive pronouns and to use in their place forms marked for praise or the opposite.

Comparing English and German once again, we find significant differences in syntax:

Is my wife (at) home?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Ist mein-e Frau zu Haus-e?

Is your wife (at) home?  
 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15  
 Ist Ihr -e Frau (Gemahlin) zu Haus-e?

In German, in contrast to English, adjectives and nouns are inflected for number, gender, and case. Hence the marker -e (3 and 10) of the nominative singular feminine. Nonfamiliarity is marked in German by the choice of Ihr (9) in place of the familiar 'dein'. There is no good English equivalent for the honorific Gemahlin (12) of German. The preposition zu (5 and 13) is used with the dative case marked by -e (7) and (15).

3. 'May I accompany you (to your) home?'

K: tayk -kaci kachi ka -to kwaynch-ans-sumni -kka.  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
 J: otaku-máde issyo-ni it-té-mo kama -imas -én -ka.

Interpretation: 1. exalted house, 2. as far as, 3. together, 4. location marker, 3-4. together, 5. go, 6. -ing, 7. even, 5-7. even if one goes, 8. matter, 9. negation marker, 10. nonfamiliarity marker, 11. negation marker, 8-11. it doesn't matter, 12. question marker, 5-12. may (I) go, 1-12 literally: 'Doesn't it matter even if one goes together as far as the exalted house?'

The principal differences in the structures of the Japanese and Korean versions of sentence 3. are morphological: the location of the negation-marking suffix and the use of a location marker (4) in Japanese. The Japanese form -te (6) corresponds to a Korean form -e which, however, is deleted after a vowel (ka-e → ka).

The English and German translations of sentence 3. differ from each other to a considerable extent:

May I accompany you (to your) home?  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
 Darf ich Sie nach Haus-e begleiten?

In German the verb begleiten 'accompany' (9-10) is marked as an infinitive by -en (10) and placed at the end of the sentence. Darf (1) in contrast to English 'may' has different forms for different persons of the subject. Nonfamiliarity is marked in German by the selection of Sie (4) in place of the familiar 'dich'. The preposition nach (5) is used with the dative case marked by -e (8).

4. 'Although that movie wasn't any good, I (still) didn't go home.'

K: ku- yenghwa-ka co-chi anh -e -to,  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9  
 J: so-no éega -ga yo-ku na -kute-mo,  
 K: cip-ey tol -a ka -ci anh -ess -ey-yo.  
 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19  
 J: uti -e káet-te ik -a -ná-katta-n -desu.

Interpretation: 1. that 2. linking morpheme, 1-2. that, 3. movie, 4. subject marker, 5. good, 6. linking morpheme, 7. negation marker, 8. -ing, 5-8. not being good, 9. even, 5-9. although not being good, 10. humble house, 11. destination marker, 12. return, 13. -ing, 14. go, 12-14. go back, 15. linking morpheme, 16. negation marker, 17. past-tense marker, 18-19. polite-style marker. 1-19 literally: "Although that movie was not good, a going back to the humble house did not take place."

Except for two morphological differences—the suffix -no (2) on the Japanese word for 'this' and the structure of the polite-style marker—the sentence has the same structure in both languages.

Once more, for comparison, note how extensively the English and German versions differ from each other:

Although the movie was no good,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Obwohl d -er Film kein Gut -er ge-wes-en ist,

I did not return home.

13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23

bin ich nicht nach Haus-e ge-gang-en.

Explanation of the German: -er (3 and 8) marker for nominative singular masculine, ge- (9 and 21) prefix marking past participle, -wes- (10) 'be', -en (11 and 23) suffix marking past participle, 9-11. 'been', ist (12) 'is', 9-12. 'was', bin (13) 'am', nach (18) 'to', -e (20) marker for dative singular neuter (used with preposition nach (18) 'to'), 22. 'go (on foot)', 21-23. 'gone', 13 + 21-23. 'went'.

The example above illustrates well how far the syntax of German can diverge from that of English. I will no longer belabor this point but in the following cases will confine myself to a comparison of Korean and Japanese.

5. 'I had not taken a walk there until yesterday, but last night I went there and took a walk.'

K: ecey -kkaci-nun ke-ki-se sanppo ha-n il -i eps-ec

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

J: kinóo-made -wa so-ko-de sanpo si-ta kotó-ga ná -katta

K: -ci-man, ecey-ppam-ey ke-ki ka-se sanppo ha-yss-ey-yo.

14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

J: -ga, sakú-ban so-ko- e it- te sanpo si-tá -n -desu.

Interpretation: 1. yesterday, 2. until, 3. topic marker, 4. that, 5. place, 4-5. there, 6. location marker, 7. walk, 8. do, 7-8. take a walk, 9. past-tense marker, 10. experience, 11. subject marker, 12. not to be, 13. past-tense marker, 14. linking morpheme, 15. although, 16. yesterday, 17. evening, 18. location marker, 19-20. there, 21. location marker, 22. go, 23. -ing, 24-25. take a walk, 26. past-tense marker, 27-28. polite-style marker. 1-28 literally: "Although until yesterday the experience of taking a walk there did not exist, last night going there and taking a walk occurred."

In spite of the complexity of sentence 5. it is possible to translate it almost morpheme for morpheme from Korean into Japanese. It should be noted however that the Korean past-tense marker -n (9) is used attributively, while the past-tense marker -yss (26) is used predicatively. Modern Japanese has lost this distinction, -ta (9 and 26) serving in both cases, although the distinction occurred in the Old Japanese attributive -taru vs. the predicative -tari.

6. 'People are coming and going.'

K: salam-i ka-tta w -atta ha-ko iss-umni -ta.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

J: hito -ga it-tári kí-tari si-te i -más -u.

Interpretation: 1. people, 2. subject marker, 3. go, 4 and 6. alternating activity marker, 5. come, 3-6. alternately going and coming, 7. do, 8. -ing, 9. be, 10. non-familiarity marker, 11. nonpast-tense marker, 12. statement marker. 1-11 literally: "People are doing alternate going and coming."

Sentence 6. illustrates the idiosyncratic alternative-activity construction.

7. 'Can we buy the tickets in advance?'

K: phyo -lul cikum sa noh-a -to cos -sumni-kka.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

J: kippu-o íma kat-te ok -té-mo í -i -desu -ka.

Interpretation: 1. ticket(s), 2. direct-object marker, 3. now, 4. buy, 5. -ing, 6. put, 4-6. buy for future use, 7. -ing, 8. even, 4-8. even if buying for future use, 9. good, 10. nonpast-tense marker (no Korean counterpart), 11. nonfamiliarity marker, 12. question marker. 1-12 literally: "Is it good even if the tickets are bought and put now?"

Sentence 7. illustrates the idiosyncratic use of the verb 'put' as an auxiliary verb meaning 'for future use'.

I could go on and on with examples, but hope that I have already made my point. What I have tried to show is that Japanese and Korean share much more of their syntax and semantics than two languages which have been separated for over 4500 years should.

It seems to me that the obvious conclusion to draw from the foregoing data is that Japanese and Korean, having lost contact with each other five or six millennia ago, once again came into contact—intimate contact—which lasted until just before the period of our earliest documents in Japanese, that is, until about 1500 years ago.

But contact between languages usually results in loanwords, and intimate contact can result in numerous loanwords. Yet there appear to be relatively few Korean loanwords in Japanese (or vice versa) dating from about 1500 years ago. Something must have inhibited the transmission of loanwords, something that did not, however, prevent the two languages from assuming nearly identical syntactic and semantic structures. The only situation I can suggest that might have caused this to happen is the establishment of a bilingual community in which it was considered necessary that both languages be maintained, and this for over a period of centuries.

Such communities are not really so uncommon. For half a millennium the Finns have spoken both Finnish and Swedish, with the result that it has become easy to find semantic counterparts in the two languages. Many Swedish constructions have counterparts in Finnish that are not found in the Finno-Ugric relatives of Finnish. Although there are not many direct Swedish loanwords in Finnish, many Swedish expressions have acquired word-for-word equivalents. The Finnish situation resulted of course from a conquest by the Swedes, and a prehistoric conquest is most likely to account for the appearance of a bilingual community using languages ancestral to Japanese and Korean. The Finnish example provides other parallels for what I think might have been the case with Japanese and Korean 2000–1500 years ago, but there is one big difference: Finnish and Swedish started off with totally different typologies, and their typologies have not become all that similar. Japanese and Korean on the other hand very likely exhibited an even greater typological similarity than do Japanese and Turkish today.

When I speak of a bilingual community such as has existed in Finland and such as I think must have existed for the ancestors of Japanese and Korean 2000–1500 years ago, I do not mean a community in which every one is perfectly bilingual. Rather I have in mind a community in which only a portion of the population is bilingual—and at that, imperfectly—a portion consisting of those who are in regular contact with speakers of the dominant language. This portion, by virtue of this contact, exercises direct influence on the monolingual subordinate population, an influence which is in part linguistic.

Where is a bilingual community speaking pre-Japanese and pre-Korean apt to have existed 2000–1500 years ago? The most likely place is the western half of the Korean peninsula. Here were situated the countries called Koguryo and Paekche. There are Chinese references to Koguryo and Paekche names which contain unmistakably Japanese elements. These include the numerals 3, 5, 7, and 10. The forms are remarkably similar to their Japanese counterparts, but not at all close to the Korean (I Gi-Mun 1963).

	Koguryo	Old Japanese	Early Korean
three	mit	mi-tu	sey
five	utsi	itu-tu	tasos
seven	nanin	nana-tu	nilkup
ten	tək	tōwo	yel

We have no direct documentation of these languages. Koguryo and Paekche themselves fell when Korea was united under the Kingdom of Silla in the seventh century.

I would like to propose the following scenario to account for the data presented and argued above:

1. In the third or fourth millennium B.C. the ancestors of the Altaic languages, of Korean, and of Japanese, having been in intimate contact with each other, possibly as members of a single dialect continuum, split up and go their separate ways on the Northeast Asian mainland. One group, speaking what I shall label K-1, invades the Korean peninsula. Since there are numerous words in Korean which



cannot be identified as either Altaic or Chinese, it is reasonable to assume that the invaders mix with the natives. Interaction between the two produces a pidginized form of K-1, that is to say, a form with a reduced vocabulary and simplified morphology, to which each group gives its own pronunciation. With the passage of time this pidginized K-1 is creolized, that is to say, vocabulary is added to it until it can be used in all situations and not just for interaction between the two groups. This creole, which I shall label K-2, goes on to replace both the language of the invaders and that of the natives. With regard to pronunciation it is quite possible that Korean acquired its aspirated stops at this stage. They are not a feature of Altaic, but are found in Chinese and might have existed in the language(s) of the neighboring Korean peninsula as well.

2. By 300 B.C. another group associated with Altaic and speaking what I shall label J-1 (under pressure from the Hsiung Nu?) invades the western side of the Korean peninsula, Kyushu, and western Honshu. The more mountainous eastern side of the Korean peninsula remains free and eventually is organized into the Kingdom of Silla.

3. A portion of the conquered population in western Korea learns to speak J-1. This portion, knowing both the language of the conqueror and the conquered, is in a strong position to influence the rest of the subject K-2 speakers. The bilingualism of this intermediary portion is maintained for generations, during which time its K-2 is heavily influenced by J-1, and in turn influences the K-2 of the monolingual segment of the subjected population. There is a conscious effort to keep the two languages separate, but as time passes it is only the lexicons and morphologies (and to some extent the phonological systems) that can be kept apart. The resulting syntactically modified K-2 I shall label K-3. K-2 continues in use in the eastern mountains.

4. Meanwhile in Kyushu and western Honshu the J-1 speaking conquerors have subjugated a population identified with the Final Jōmon culture. Their interaction with these people produces the Yayoi culture. It also produces a pidginized J-1. The conquerors are probably not all that numerous, but the increased political unity brought about by the conquest leads to the popularity of pidginized J-1 as a lingua franca in what is probably a linguistically very diverse Japan. A parallel for this might well be the rapid spread of Pidgin English in Papua New Guinea in our time. As time goes by the pidginized J-1 is creolized with native vocabulary and becomes the language of conqueror and native alike—a language which I shall label J-2.

5. There has been much speculation as to the nature of the language(s) spoken by the Jōmon peoples. Considering the fact that a sedentary way of life had existed in Japan for millennia and that without any evidence of political unity, it is highly unlikely that the islands exhibited anything in the way of linguistic uniformity. There were surely many languages spoken in Jōmon Japan. Doubtless some were related to Ainu. But on the basis of toponymy it appears unlikely that languages related to Ainu were spoken in western Japan. To judge from the phonology of Japanese the Western Jōmon peoples spoke languages with a (C)V syllabic structure (that is, where all syllables consist of a vowel or of a consonant followed

by a vowel). Korean and the Altaic languages on the other hand have a (C)V(C) syllabic structure, as does Ainu also. More precisely, Korean has a (C)(G)V(C) syllabic structure, in which (G) stands for an optional glide (i.e., w or y). The earliest samples of Japanese show a language with eight vowels, but these are soon reduced to five. In the Ryukyus they are further reduced to four or even to three. This certainly suggests that the language was being influenced by people who could not handle the eight vowels. A number of vocabulary items suggest that the language(s) of the Western Final Jōmon people was/were related to those of the Malayo-Polynesian family (Ohno 1970). The Polynesian languages in particular all have five vowels and a (C)V syllabic structure, although such is not the case with the Malayan languages.

6. During the last two centuries B.C., with the establishment of the Han Empire, the influence of Chinese begins to be felt strongly in the area of Korea and western Japan. B. Karlgren (1926) has shown that a number of Chinese words entered Japanese before the period when Buddhism and writing were introduced into Japan. To judge from the shapes of these words, I would say that they had entered Japanese centuries before, probably earlier in the Yayoi period. Chinese influence may not have been confined to vocabulary. The absence of affixes indicating the person of the subject is a step in the direction of Chinese—a step shared by the Tungusic language Manchu. So also is the absence of a distinction between mass nouns and count nouns and the attendant elaboration of classifiers used in counting. Both of these syntactic features have existed in Japanese from the time of the earliest records in the language, and they are shared by Korean.

7. In the sixth century Silla conquers Koguryo, Paekche, and Mimana, unifying all of Korea and breaking the contacts of the western Korean states with Japan. Mimana, on the southern tip of the Korean peninsula, maintained close relations with Japan until the end. The languages of western Korea (K-3), which had been so much influenced by J-1, might have been restructured at this time except for the fact that Korea is not so completely centralized under Silla, and when Silla collapses at the beginning of the tenth century, the country is once more united under Koguryo, now called Koryo, with its capital at Kaesong (in the west!). Henceforth it is the language of Koryo (K-3) which develops into modern Korean, the same language which had earlier assumed a syntax similar to that of Japanese.

8. Beginning with the introduction of Buddhism there is extensive borrowing from Chinese by Japanese (J-2) and Korean (K-3). This borrowing, which eventually turns more than half of the vocabularies of Japanese and Korean into Chinese loanwords, is documented for Japanese in the historical period. The earliest Japanese documents show a relatively small number of Chinese loans.

#### SUMMARY

To restate briefly the linguistic evidence relevant to the prehistory and early history of Japanese:

1. Comparative linguistics has shown that Japanese was in intimate contact with Korean and the Altaic languages in the remote past.

2. I have presented an argument that Japanese was once again in intimate contact with Korean, probably at the time of the Yayoi period.
3. Comparative linguistics has shown that Japanese came under Chinese influence probably starting with the Han Empire, at the same time that it was in intimate contact with Korean.
4. Documents in Japanese show that the language has been heavily influenced by Chinese *since* the introduction of Buddhism. Korean shows a similar influence which presumably took place at the same time.
5. A number of lexical items in Japanese (particularly those referring to body parts) suggest an early connection with Malayo-Polynesian. This is thought to indicate that the languages of western Japan in late Jōmon times were distantly related to Malayo-Polynesian.
6. Toponymy shows that eastern Japan used languages related to Ainu in late Jōmon and Yayoi times.

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